

~~Englands, Churches~~

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A

*True Church-Man*

Set in a

Just and Clear Light:

OR, AN

ESSAY

Towards the

RIGHT CHARACTER

OF

A FAITHFUL SON of the  
ESTABLISH'D CHURCH.

L O N D O N:

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SIR

**W**HEN, the other Day, at Mr. B's Lodging, to one that asked me whether I were a *high* or a *low Church-man*, I made answer that I hoped I was neither; for that I so well approved of the Constitution of our Church, as far as I understood it, that, with God's Blessing, I was fully resolved in all Things to conform to it, and willingly to act neither *above* nor *below* it; and that therefore, with relation to the establish'd Church, I would own no other Title but that of a *true Church-man*: You may remember you said you would gladly know from me the exact Character of such a *true Church-man*, and how he is to be distinguished from both the others. In return to which Request of yours, I here send you the most faithful Draught that I am able to make, according to the best of my Apprehensions of him: But how he is to be distinguish'd, and in what and how many Things he differs from the *high* or *low Church-man*; or whether he differs at all from the honest and sincere Men of both Appellations, I must leave to your own Determination,

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having

having never yet been able to find any exact and settled meaning of these Terms, to which both the contending Parties, that use them, will agree.

By a *Church-man* we all mean a *Christian who embraces the Communion of the established Church*: To this add the Word *true*, and then the Character of a *true Churchman* will be, First, That he is a *true Christian*; and Secondly, That he *truly, and not in Pretence only, embraces the Communion of the establish'd Church*.

First then, *A true Church-man is a true Christian*: That is to say, he unfeignedly, not only in the general, believes that the Religion which was taught by *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles is the true Religion; but also embraces and gives his Assent to every Doctrine that appears from the Holy Scriptures to have been taught by them: And where any Doubt arises concerning the Sense of Scripture, he not only endeavours to clear it by comparing parrallel Places; but also pays a great Deference, in all such Cases, to the Opinion of the antient Fathers of the Christian Church; who being Men of great and undoubted Integrity and also living, some in the *Apostles* time, and others very near it, must needs be very proper Judges of the true Meaning of what they both taught and writ. Nor is it to him

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him an Objection against any such Doctrine, that the Thing is above his Reason, or that he cannot frame a clear and adequate Notion in his Mind of it: For altho' it is absolutely impossible for a rational Being to give his Assent to Contradictions, or consequently, to believe any thing which plainly appears to be contrary to the evident Principles of Reason: Yet considering, that as long as we are in this World, *We know but in part, and prophesie in part,* 1 Cor. 13. 9. And *we see* (almost all Things indeed, as some late Philosophers have undertaken to prove, but more especially the Things of God) but as *through a Glass*; that is, *darkly ἐν αἰνίσματι*, as it were in a Riddle, as the Margin of our Bibles has it *v. 12.* Considering this, I say, he is well assured that many Things may be, and are true, which yet are beyond or very difficult to his Conception: And therefore thinks himself bound to believe whatsoever God has delivered in his holy Word, according to the usual Meaning and Acceptation of the Terms or Expressions, altho' he has but very obscure and analogous Notions of the Things so delivered.

Again, As a true Christian, he not only assents to and believes whatever he can find that God has declared; but he also makes it his great Care and Study, first, to know,

and then conscientiously to practice, all and every part of his Duty. What God has commanded he will not willingly omit: What he has forbidden he will not do, or comply with: In those Things where the Law of God has determined nothing, to the best of his Knowledge and Power, he acts according to the Rules of Christian Prudence, so as to give as little Offence to any one as possibly he can: And where lawful Authority enacts any thing that is not contrary to the Laws of God, he gives Obedience to it, *not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake.*

Nor lastly, does our *Church-man*, as a *Christian*, think it enough to have a true Faith, and himself to lead a good and godly Life; but he judges it to be an inseparable Property of true Godliness, in his Station, to do whatever in him lies, in order to bring others also to the same Profession and Practice: And therefore he takes care not only to be *holy*, but also *exemplary* in his Life! and to *let his Light so shine before Men, that they seeing his good Works, may follow his Example*; and thereby advance the Honour of his Church and Religion; and glorifie his Father which is in Heaven, Matth. 5. 16. Nor does he fail, as occasion offers, (besides shewing in his Life a good Example) to make use of

of sober and modest Reproofs, Admonitions, and whatever other Means may be proper for him, to stop the Course of Vice and Infidelity, and promote the Practice of true Virtue and Piety, amongst all Persons whatsoever, with whom he has any Intercourse or Converse.

Thus does our *true Church-man* make it the first and chief Part of his care, not only to be, but also (as far as without Pride or Affectation he may) to *appear* a serious and *true Christian*. And altho' he cannot but *rejoice* whenever he finds the Interest of the Church to be promoted, altho' it be done even by wicked Men; as *St. Paul* did, that *Christ was preached*, tho' not *sincerely*, but in *Pretence*, and out of *Envy, Strife and Contention*, Phil. i. 18. yet whenever a Man is known to be tainted with any Principles, or to allow himself in any Omissions or Practices that are contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Purity and Strictness of the Gospel; however zealous he may appear for the Church, yet he can never look upon him as a *true Church-man*, any more than *St. Paul* did upon those envious and contentious Preachers as good Christians. And thus much for the first Part of our *Church-man's* Character; *he is a true Christian*. I proceed to the

Second, Which is, that *he truly embraces*

*the Communion of the establish'd Church.*  
That is to say,

First, *He unfeignedly believes that in the Communion of our Church, as by Law establish'd, nothing is wanting that is necessary to eternal Salvation.* He is fully persuaded that we embrace all the Articles of the Christian Faith; teach all the Rules of a pious and good Life, and omit no part of *Christ's* Institution in the Administration either of Baptism or the Lord's Supper: Nor does he apprehend any more to be *necessary* to any Man's Salvation, besides a true Faith, a holy Life, to be regularly admitted into the Church by Baptism, and to partake of the Benefits of *Christ's* Passion, by a due Participation of that Bread and that Cup which he himself has appointed for that Purpose. And therefore a *true Church-man* thinks he may safely challenge all the World to prove that any thing is or can be necessary for the Attainment of everlasting Happiness, which is not as effectually to be had in the establish'd Church, as in any Society of Christians in the World.

Secondly, *He is no less unfeignedly of Opinion that our Church requires nothing that is, or can be a hindrance of Salvation, from any one who communicates with her.* He knows nothing that can obstruct the Salvation of any Man, but *sin*; nor can he allow any  
thing



thing to be a *sin*, but what is a *Transgression* of God's Law, 1 Joh. 3. 4. For where there is no Law there is no Transgression, Rom. 4. 15. that is to say, no Sin. Here therefore he requires our Adversaries to produce any one *Law of God*, and to shew that any thing prescribed by our Church, is either expressly or by good consequence contrary thereunto: And until this be done (which, tho' often demanded never yet has been done) however some Things in our Constitution may be plausibly declaimed against by some that are disaffected to it; (and what almost is there against which ingenious Men cannot frame some sort of Objections) yet as long as nothing is therein to be found, but what, upon the strictest Examination will abide the Test of God's Law: He concludes that there is no manner of Sin, and therefore no Obstacle to Salvation in our Communion. And therefore when he finds our Adversaries, with much noise and seeming Pomp, dressing up their Objections against the establish'd Church in hard Words, and obscure and doubtful Expressions; such as *Popery*, or *symbolizing with Papists*, *Will-worship*, *Superstition*, *significant or symbolical Ceremonies*, *making of new Sacraments*, and the like: He takes it for a certain Sign that they dare not set their Cause in the true



true Light, and therefore endeavour, as much as they can, to perplex and darken it by such Phrases as are beyond the Understanding of the common People, whom they endeavour to frighten with such Viours as Men of Sense and Thought may well despise. For let them but once clearly and distinctly tell us what they mean by *Popery*, *Will-worship*, *Superstition*, &c. and then shew that these Things, *in the Notion they explain them*, are *contrary to some Law of God*, which they must produce; and lastly, that our Church is guilty of these Things, or any one of them, *in that very same Notion*; and then they will take the right way to make it appear, that there is just Ground for their Separation from her. But since this never has, nor, as he thinks, can be done, he is of Opinion, that neither a *Church-man*, nor indeed any Man that is impartial, can see any just Reason for refusing any thing that is in it self lawful, and requir'd by lawful Authority, only because some Men who are disaffected to our Constitution, are pleased to give it a hard and odious Name. For not the *Name*, but the *Nature* of a thing must always be our Direction in the Acceptance or Refusal of it.

And here if we impartially, and without Prejudice, do but consider the true *Nature* of those Constitutions of our Church that

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are so much cry'd out against (which must chiefly be gathered from the *Design* and Intention of the Church itself in appointing them) it may well raise our Wonder how it is possible for Men of Candour and Ingenuity to frame any Objection against the *Lawfulness* of them. In all publick Transactions, whether Sacred or Civil, it has ever been found, if not absolutely necessary, yet highly expedient, to fix and determine some certain outward Rites and Observances; sometimes for the Distinction of Persons one from another, sometimes for the Preservation of Order and Regularity, and sometimes as Signs and Tokens, or Memorials of what is or ought to be the Design of the Person or Persons that perform or are engaged in such a Transaction. And where God himself has not fix'd and determin'd these outward Things (as in most Cases he did in the *Jewish* Church) either Custom, or positive humane Authority has always been found more or less to have done it. Of this, in Civil Matters, the Instances are notorious, as the Difference of Garments and Robes for the Distinction of Sexes, Qualities and Stations; the Formalities observed in passing of Laws, and electing and inaugurating of Magistrates; signing, sealing and delivering of Writings in token of the Reality of Inten-

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tion in the Parties who thereby bind and oblige themselves; and (to omit other Instances) the giving of a Twig and a Sod in token of Livery of Seisin of Land. Then, as for things Sacred, what Christian Church is there upon Earth that has not some Rites or Ceremonies, or outward Observances, either by Law or Custom established among them for the Ends above mention'd? Read but the first Section of Mr. *Durel's* Book, entituled, *A View of the Government and publick Worship of God in the reformed Churches beyond the Seas*; and it will give you abundant Satisfaction in this Point. And even our own Dissenters, who endeavour to represent our Rites and Ceremonies with such a formidable Aspect, have not with all their Care been able to keep themselves free from some Things of the like Nature. Thus for Example, their *Directory for publick Worship* plainly supposes an Appointment of Time and Place for such Worship, and expressly settles the Method in which it is to be performed: In the Celebration of the Lords Supper it prescribes the Posture of sitting, and in Matrimony the Ceremony of joining of hands; their *solemn League and Covenant* (to which they *swore*) was ordered to be taken *with Hands lifted up*: And tho' all Dissenters that own the Lawfulness of taking an Oath, do allow it to be

be an Act of *religious Worship* (that is to say, whereby we express the Honour and Reverence we have for God) yet I never could hear of any of them who made the least Scruple of the *Ceremony* of laying the Hand upon the Holy Bible and kissing it, as a *Sign* or *Token* of the solemn calling of God to witness. And now, after all this, how strange is it that such great Fault should be found with our Church, and even a Separation made from it, on account of such very Things as these, no way unlawful in themselves, and appointed only and altogether for the decent and laudable Ends above mention'd! For it is notorious, that we place no intrinsic Holiness in a Linen Garment; only the Church appoints a Surplice to be worn by the Minister that officiates, as a decent Distinction between him and the People: Our Rubrick expressly declares, that by kneeling at the Holy Communion *no Adoration is intended either to the Bread and Wine, or to any corporeal Presence of the natural Flesh and Blood of Christ.* But that *this Order is meant for a Signification of our humble and grateful Acknowledgment of the Benefits of Christ, &c.* nor is the Cross after Baptism appointed for any other Purpose but expressly as a *Token, or Memorial* to all Persons baptized, that *they be not ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ*



*Christ crucified, &c.* It is not my Design here to descend to the Particulars of this Controversie: But our Church, in the short Discourse of *Ceremonies* before the Book of *Common Prayer*, having expressly own'd that her Ceremonies *have been devised by Men*, and therefore are not obtruded upon the People as of Divine Institution; that they are retained amongst us *for a decent Order in the Church, and because they pertain to Edification* — and to *stir up the dull Mind of Man to the Remembrance of his Duty to God*; and therefore are not by any to be looked upon as new Sacraments or Instruments of conveying God's Grace to us; and that *the keeping or omitting of a Ceremony in itself considered, is but a small Thing*; but *the willful and Contemptuous Transgression, and breaking of a common Order and Discipline*, is in this Case, the *Offence before God*. Our Church, I say, having made this clear and full Declaration of her Meaning: He that shall yet condemn any of her Rites or Ceremonies as *unlawful*, must at the same time also condemn kneeling, lifting up the Hands or Eyes in Prayer, joyning of Hands in Marriage, kissing of the Book in taking of an Oath, and whatever else either Law or Custom has establish'd either here or any where else in religious Performances for the same Ends

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that our Church has proposed in the appointing or retaining of all or any of such her Constitutions. But to return from this Digression.

Thirdly, *It is in like manner, the settled Judgment of our Church-man, that wherever a Church by lawful Authority establish'd, neither wants any thing that is necessary to Salvation, nor requires any thing that is a Hindrance of it; with such a Church it is lawful for any Christian to join in Communion.* And consequently, that the Communion of our Church neither is, nor can be look'd upon as unlawful; except a Man should be so absurd as to say, that it may be unlawful to do a Thing, tho' no Law of God or Man has any way (whether expressly or by consequence) forbidden it.

Fourthly and lastly, And since it is beyond dispute the Duty of every Christian to do whatsoever lawfully he may for the maintaining the Peace and Unity both of the Church universal, and also of each and every part of it; *It is also the Opinion and Judgment of our Church-man, that wherever the Communion of an establish'd Church is lawful and sufficient to salvation; there of necessity it must be unlawful to set up any separate Church or Congregation in Opposition to her.* For if once it be allow'd, as lawful, thus to devide from such a Church, it will

will, he thinks, be impossible to find out any Rule or Principle upon which to put a stop to perpetual Divisions after Divisions, as Mens Fancies may incline them farther and farther to depart from each other, untill every single Man comes to stand separate by himself, and no such thing as a *Christian Society* or *Congregation* remains upon the Earth; and yet no Man to be blamed for this Separation: Which how it can consist with the Notion of a *Church* or *Congregation* ἐκκλησία, or the Illustrations of that Notion, which we meet with in Holy Scripture, from a Body and its Members; a Kingdom, a City, a Family, and the People that compose it, a Sheep-fold, with divers others, which all do denote that Unity and Society which all Christians are obliged to maintain and keep up one with another, he leaves to the serious Consideration of those Men, whose Practices cannot be justified but upon such dividing Principles: And therefore it is with him an undoubted Conclusion, That *to divide from the establish'd Church of England, as it now stands, or to set up any other Church or Congregation in Opposition to her, within those Precincts where she is so establish'd, is altogether sinful and unlawful.* And thus much for the Second Part of a true Churchman's Character, which is, *That he truly embraces*

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*embraces the Communion of the establish'd Church.* Give me leave from what has been said, to draw the Three following Corollaries.

*First,* Whereas, in some Things that are confessedly not necessary to Salvation, many learned Men of several Churches have carried their Opinions farther than what their Church has ever, by any publick Act, decreed or determined. If we suppose the Case to be the same amongst our selves, as perhaps it may; yet *a Man that receives and embraces whatever our Church has, by any Authentick Act or Decree, establish'd or determined, may be, and is a true Church-man* (that is to say, a true Christian, and one who truly embraces the Communion of the establish'd Church) *altho' in such other Things, as I have but now mention'd, he should happen to be of a different Judgment from the private Opinion of never so many of our greatest Divines.*

*Secondly,* Whereas it is allow'd, on all sides, that our Rites and Ceremonies, and some other Things, by our Ecclesiastical Laws enacted, are in their own Nature indifferent, and but of humane Institution, ordain'd and appointed for the sake of Decency and Order, and the avoiding of Confusion and Irregularity. *He that conscientiously conforms to whatever of that Nature*

ture is *establiſh'd* amongst us (as being lawful in it ſelf, and appointed by lawful Authority) is yet a true Church-man, *altho'* he may be of Opinion that ſeveral of theſe ſame [indifferent] Things may be altered for the better; and accordingly endeavours, in a peaceable, modeſt and chriſtian way, to get them ſo altered by the ſame Authority that at firſt *establiſh'd* them. And though in this his Opinion he ſhould be miſtaken; yet is he nevertheless a true Church-man: It being no part of the Character of ſuch a Man to be free from all manner of Errour. But except it appears very clearly to him that the Thing is really ſo *indifferent*, he will neither attempt, nor ſo much as give his Conſent that any Alteration ſhould be made in it. For tho' his Charity is ſuch, that he will not *condemn* any Church or ſingle Perſon, but where he has *clearly and plainly* the Law of God of his ſide, yet where he finds any thing to be *ſettled*; and but even probable Arguments to induce him to think that it may be of Divine or Apoſtolick Inſtitution; he is ſure it is the ſafeſt way to let it ſtand as it is: And whatever Alterations he endeavours or conſents to, it is always with a Deſign to promote Piety, Peace and Unity among Chriſtians, and neither to raiſe any unneceſſary Controverſie in the Church, nor ſo much as *ſeemingly*

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to encroach upon the Authority of *Christ* or his Apostles. And farther, before he will consent to any Alteration, even in such Things as are undoubtedly indifferent, he carefully weighs the probable Consequences of such an Attempt, and considers, *First*, That if we have not before-hand a reasonable Assurance of some Good that will follow from it, it ought to be let alone; because possibly it may produce some Evil, tho' every Man cannot easily foresee it. *Secondly*, That the Good which is aimed at by promoting such an Alteration in our Church (that is to say, an Union with the *Dissenters*) can with no Assurance be expected from it, except some reasonable Number of those who dissent from us, do beforehand positively and particularly declare, that they will be satisfied, and join in Communion with us upon the making of it: And *Thirdly*, that as well meaning Dissenters, through Mistake or Weakness, do take Offence at our innocent and decent Ceremonies; so on the other side there may, possibly, amongst our selves be many of the like Complexion, who would be equally offended at the Alteration of some of them: And to run the Hazzard of a Disturbance within our selves; and, it may be, the Loss of many of our own Members, while we are not sure of gaining as

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many others over to us as may counterbalance this Danger, is what a *true Churchman* will by no means consent to. And therefore, upon the whole he concludes, That *all manner of Alterations in the Church*, as well as in the State, *ought to be cautiously and thoroughly considered, both in themselves and their Consequences, before they are made or attempted.*

Thirdly, *A Man may be a true Churchman* (according to the Definition laid down) *altho' he consents and desires that a Toleration may be granted to those that are of a different Persuasion from him in Matters of Religion.* For altho' he, for his part, is abundantly convinced that he cannot be in a surer and safer way to eternal Salvation, than in the Communion of the establish'd Church; yet to compel others (who are not under the like Conviction) by any Penalties to be inflicted either on their Bodies or Goods, to profess or practise what they solemnly declare to be against their Conscience, he judges to be neither Reasonable nor Agreeable to the Rules of the Gospel. But then, as he is a faithful Subject to the *Civil State*, as well as a sincere Member of the *establish'd Church*, he never can *willingly* yield to such a Toleration as may endanger the Ruin or Downfal of the one or other: And therefore, altho' no Man can be hindred from thinking whatever he pleases; nor

ought

ought any one to be compelled to profess a Religion, or to worship God any way that he is persuaded is unlawful; yet our *Church-man* does not think it reasonable that all Men that please should be allowed to gather Congregations, and there to teach and preach whatever Doctrine they shall think fit. For this would be not only a *Toleration*, but even an *Invitation* and Encouragement to every Man that were ingenious, and not sufficiently awed by Conscience, if he could not be employed or preferred to his Mind in the Church, to set up for himself; and not only to endeavour to gain such a Number of Disciples as may support and maintain him, but also to strengthen himself and his Party, by sowing Division and Distraction among those from whom he has divided: Which however, at first, it may seem only to threaten the *Church*, yet will soon be found (as dear-bought Experience assures us) to have a very evil Influence upon the State also. Neither does he judge it fit that any Toleration should *willingly* be granted, and much less Encouragement given to those whose Principles or Practices do shew that they would not tolerate the establish'd Church, if the Power were in their Hands; except they first do renounce and disown such Principles and Practices. For if it be

in my Power to keep a Man's Hands tied and his Tongue quiet; I ought not, in common Prudence, to let loose the one or the other, until I am sufficiently assured that he will not make use of them, upon the first Opportunity, to my Ruin and Destruction. And therefore much less will a *true Church-man* give his Consent that any part of the civil or military Power should be put into the Hands of such Men, whose Interest, Inclination or Conscience can hardly be supposed to allow them to be impartial to the establish'd Church in the Administration of it. For (whatever Necessity may sometimes compel them to) he believes there never was any Kingdom or Commonwealth (who were true to their Profession) that at any time have *made it their Choice* to put into Places of considerable Trust or Power, any such Persons as have professed to believe the establish'd Religion or Worship to be unlawful, and consequently must think themselves in Conscience obliged to endeavour what they can the Alteration of it.

But there are two Things yet, concerning which, I remember, you desired particularly to know the *naked and undisguised Thoughts* of a *true Church-man*: The first is the *late Revolution*, with the Consequences thereof, namely King *William's* Accession.

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cession to the Throne, and her present Majesty's to the Crown of these her Kingdoms. But because a few Men, who once were Members of the establish'd Church; but now have separated themselves from her, do disapprove of the *late Revolution*, and refuse to swear Allegiance to the present Government; therefore to suspect even those who have been constant and firm to the Interest both of King *William* and her present Majesty, always pray'd for them, as their Sovereigns in their publick Worship, and have sworn Allegiance and Fidelity to them, in Opposition to all Competitors or Pretenders whatsoever: To suspect, I say, such Persons as these, as if they were not well affected to the Queen or her Title; if some very good Ground be not produced for such a Suspicion, I think is very highly uncharitable. It is possible that Men who are very different in their *Hypothesis* concerning the Ground and Original of civil Power, may yet, in their *Practice*, agree in being very Faithful and Loyal to that particular Government under which they at one time live: And therefore as long as you cannot tax a Man with any thing that is *Disloyal*, either in his Words or Actions, you ought not, by any Means, to endeavour to bring him under such a Suspicion; because in point of *Speculation*



lation, he perhaps proceeds upon a different Scheme of Principles from that which you have laid down to your self. However, to give you all the Satisfaction I can in this Matter, I here present you with the *naked and undisguised Thoughts* both of my self and other *true Church-men*, as far as I am acquainted with them, touching this whole Matter, which are as follows.

*First*, That *the late King James*, by refusing to govern his Subjects according to the Fundamental Laws and Constitutions of the Realm (to which legal Government only his People were obliged to submit) and by assuming to himself an illegal and arbitrary Power (which was in effect the setting up of a new Kingdom or Government, to which his Subjects were no way bound to yield or give Obedience;) and lastly, By withdrawing himself from the Kingdom, rather than yield that those Laws and Constitutions which he had infringed, should again be restored to their due Force; *did really*, and in the strictest propriety of Sense, *abdicate the Government* (that is to say, that Government with which alone he was legally invested) and consequently, *did leave the Throne vacant*; as was voted by the Commons, and agreed to by the Lords in Convention assembled in *January and February 168<sup>s</sup>.*

*Secondly*,



*Secondly*, That by the Fundamental Law of Self-preservation (which must always take Place in such Cases, where the Laws of the Land have not made sufficient Provision for the publick Safety.) *The People of England had a Right to fill the vacant Throne, and to put the abdicated Government into such Hands as might be most for the common Safety.* For, for them to have remained in the same Condition that K. *James* left them in, until he had return'd again to them at the head of an Army, had been evidently to give Way to their own Ruin and Destruction; which sure they were not obliged to do: Nor was it possible for so great a Body of Men, even for a small Time, to subsist with any Security to themselves, without some establish'd Government, as well to rule them within themselves, as to protect them from their Enemies abroad.

*Thirdly*, As it is morally impossible for so great a number of Men, as the People of *England* then were, to transact any Business jointly in their own proper Persons; so, by the fundamental Constitution of the Kingdom, the Houses of Lords and Commons, when met together, were the only legal Representatives of the whole Body of the Nation, in the Circumstances they then were; the King having withdrawn  
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himself, and refused to exert his legal Power amongst them: And therefore whatsoever a majority of both Houses did agree to, was to be construed and esteemed as the Act of the whole People; especially, if afterwards it was acquiesced in, and thereby consented to, by the generality of the Nation it self. Since then the Lords and Commons so met, did, upon King *James's* Abdication, place our late Sovereign King *William* in the Throne, and the generality of the People did acquiesce in his Government; it follows that King *William* *thereby became our rightful and lawful King*; and consequently that *our present gracious Sovereign Queen Anne* (who legally succeeds him) *is our rightful and lawful Queen.*

*Fourthly and Lastly,* Since the Supreme Legislative Power in every Kingdom and Commonwealth, has no Authority over it, whereby it may be controlled, but that of God and his Laws; and the particular Form of Government, or Rule of Succession, in any civil State, is not settled or determined by any Law of God's making: It undeniably follows, that in every Kingdom, the Supreme Legislative Power may limit the Succession to the Crown or Sovereignty, within themselves, according as shall be found most advisable for the good of the Community. From whence the  
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Consequence is, That in all Ages to come, whosoever is, or shall be, King or Queen of these Realms, BY LAW, is to be own'd and look'd upon as rightful and lawful King or Queen of the same.

The other thing, concerning which you desired to know the naked and undisguised Thoughts of a true Church-man was the Necessity of Episcopal Government in the Christian Church; together with the Consequences of that Doctrine, as well with respect to the Foreign Churches abroad, as to our Dissenters at home; whose Ecclesiastical Polity is framed after a different Model: In answer whereunto, I here freely give you my Judgment, as far as is necessary for the present Purpose.

First, Then, it is, I think allowed, by all who soberly profess Christianity, to be of divine Appointment, that the Christian Religion should publickly be taught and preached (not as a Philosophical Doctrine, which any Man of Learning may teach in a School, but authoritatively proposed to the Consciences of the People, as a Law revealed and given by God) Baptism and the Lord's Supper be administred, and Discipline (for the punishing of Offenders with Ecclesiastical Censures, and excluding such as are obstinate from the Communion of the Faithful) duly exercised. [See the Post-

*script*, and compare it with what follows.]

*Secondly*, Where any work is *by divine Appointment* to be performed, the Persons, who perform the Work, must, *ordinarily and regularly*, derive their Power for so doing from God himself. For, who but he, that has Authority to appoint the Work to be done, can give a sufficient Power to any one to take it in Hand? *Ordinarily and regularly*, I say; for, as for Cases of extraordinary Necessity; how far, in them a Man may presume upon God's *Approbation* of an Action, for the doing of which he has not, in a regular Way, received any Power, is a Point that does not come under our present Consideration. In the *ordinary and regular Method* therefore of Things, *Whosoever takes upon him to be a publick Teacher or Preacher of the Gospel, to administer Baptism or the Lord's Supper, or to exercise Ecclesiastical Discipline in the Church of Christ, must originally derive his Power for so doing from none other but God himself.*

*Thirdly*, That the Power of performing all these Offices, was at the first Foundation of the Christian Church, given by our blessed Saviour to the Twelve Apostles, by them to be communicated to other proper Persons, is what I am sure you will not deny: From whence it will follow, That

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*in whatsoever Frame or Method the Apostles did settle the Polity of the Church, in Order to the constant and continual Performance of all the said Offices, the same ought to be preserved intire (as far as possibly can be) in all succeeding Ages. Or in other Terms; however lawful and necessary it may be, to regulate the undetermined Circumstances even of a divine Institution, according to the Rules of Prudence, and the present Exigence of Things; yet, wherever it appears that any thing has been establish'd by the Apostles themselves, (who are allowed to have had their Mission and Commission immediately from Christ;) no manner of Change, by any humane Authority, ought ever to be made in any Substantial Part of such an Establishment: Whatever in Cases of extraordinary Necessity (of which I am not now speaking) may perhaps sometimes innocently be submitted to, or complied with.*

*Fourthly, (To speak in the Words of the learned Mr. Chillingworth) If we abstract from Episcopal Government all Accidentals, and consider only what is Essential and Necessary to it; we shall find in it no more but this: An Appointment of one Man of eminent Sanctity and Sufficiency, to have the Care of all the Churches within a certain Precinct or Diocese, and furnishing him with*

*Authority (not Absolute or Arbitrary, but regulated and bounded by Laws, and moderated by joining to him a convenient Number of Assistants) to the intent that all the Churches under him may be provided of good and able Pastors: And that, both of Pastors and People, Conformity to Laws, and Performance of their Duties may be required, under Penalties, not left to Discretion, but by Law appointed. Apost. Instit. of Episc. Demonstr. Sect. 2.*

*Fifthly, That this Government was received universally in the Church, either in the Apostles time, or presently after, is so evident and unquestionable, that the most learned Adversaries of this Government do themselves confess it. As you may find by the Testimonies quoted, *ibid.* Sect. 3.*

*From whence, Sixthly, I cannot but conclude with the same learned Author, Sect. 6. That seeing Episcopal Government is confessedly so Antient and so Catholick, it cannot with Reason be denied to be Apostolick. No possible Account being to be given, how a Change from that Frame of Church-Polity, which the Apostles had laid, should immediately after their Time (if not while some of them were alive) come to be universally received throughout the Christian World: And that not only without the least Opposition, but even any manner of Notice*

Notice taken, by any Writer, of that Time or since, that any such Change there was. As he most convincingly argues in the remaining Part of that short Discourse, which I earnestly recommend to your reading.

The design'd Brevity of this Letter will not permit me more largely to insist on this Point: Only this I will add, that if we allow the *universal Practice* of the Primitive Church to be a good Comment upon those Passages of holy Scripture that relate to this Matter; no impartial Man, I think, can deny that *Episcopal Government* (as I have but now stated it in the Words of Mr. Chillingworth) is of *Apostolick Institution*: Which if once we grant, it will follow, *lastly*, from the Third Proposition that I have laid down, That it ought to be preserved intire in the Church in all the Ages of it.

And thus I have freely given you my Thoughts, (and I believe they are much the same in every true Church-man) touching the *Necessity of Episcopal Government* in the Church. I come now to the Consequences of this Doctrine of which you desire to be informed. And, in my Opinion, a true Church-man, from what has been said concerning the *Necessity of Episcopacy*, in

Conjunction with his other Principles, will draw these following Inferences.

*First, That wherever Episcopal Government is settled and established, it ought by no means to be abolished. If any Bishop do assume more Power to himself than what justly belongs to him, he may and ought to be restrained by proper Authority: But wholly to abolish an Order or Office so early settled and universally received throughout the Christian Church, a true Church-man cannot but look upon as a dangerous Encroachment upon the Authority of the Apostles, or rather of Christ himself from whom they received their Commission.*

*Secondly, Where Episcopacy, as above stated, is the Government of an established Church, against whose Communion no just or sufficient Objection can be made; all Christians ought to own the Communion of that Church as lawful; and they who live within the Precincts, where she is so established, are bound in Conscience to join in Communion with her: And that notwithstanding that in their Opinion she may labour under some Defects. For where a Church is establish'd in which we may fully enjoy all the Ordinances of God that are necessary to Salvation, and are compelled to do nothing that is contrary to the Law of God; no suppo-*  
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sed Defect can justifie a Separation from such a Church:

*Thirdly*, If two Societies of Christians, in any Place or Country, do enjoy, the Freedom of their Religion; both in all other Respects equally Orthodox; but the Government of the one being Episcopal, and the other not so: *A true Church-man will think himself obliged to hold Communion with such an Episcopal Church wherever he finds it*, rather than with those who have rejected that Apostolick Form of Government. Nor is it to him material, in this Case, to say that the *Non-Episcopal Church* is established by Law, and the *Episcopal* only tolerated or connived at. For wherever he has the Opportunity of enjoying any Ordinance of God, he thinks that no humane Law ought to debar him from it: And whatever he finds or judges to have been appointed by the Apostles throughout the universal Church; and that in pursuance of that very Command and Commission which they had received for the Preaching of the Gospel, and the Performance of those other Things which confessedly are of divine Institution, and ordinarily necessary to Salvation (which he takes to be plainly the Case of Episcopacy) he looks upon as the Ordinance of God himself. But if this same Episcopal Church shall wilfully

wilfully neglect to pray for that civil Government, which by the Providence of God, and the Laws of the Place, is justly set over them: He will openly protest against this Defect in their Worship; it being, beyond all Dispute, an Apostolick Constitution, *that Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions and giving of Thanks should be made*——*For Kings and for all that are in Authority,* 1 Tim 2. 1, 2.

*Fourthly,* Wherever Episcopacy has been abolished or laid aside; *A true Church-man thinks it the Duty of every Man who professes Christianity to do what, in his Station, he fairly can for the Re-establishment of it:* And that because he takes it to be a divine Ordinance. But how far the Necessities, or invincible Prejudices of any of the foreign reformed Churches, will excuse them before God, either for the laying aside or not restoring of the Episcopal Office, he will not take upon him to judge; altho', in such Cases as these, his Charity will always incline him to the most favourable Opinion.

But *Fifthly,* If, by the Providence of God, a *true Church-man* should be under a Necessity of living in a Place, where he cannot have the Benefit of communicating with an Episcopal Church; *There is no Principle, that I have here ascribed to him, that*

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that will lay him under a necessity of absolutely refusing the Communion of a Church, that wants nothing but Episcopacy to render it truly agreeable to the Apostolick Model. Wherever he finds a defect in a Church, he thinks it his Duty to endeavour, what in his Station he can, the supplying of it: But it is not every real defect in a Church that can lay a private Christian under an Obligation of renouncing, or absolutely refusing her Communion. Every Man is certainly bound to serve God, both privately and publickly, as near as he can according to what God himself has prescribed: But if Things (where I am) are not ordered, in all Respects, exactly according to this Rule; and it be no way in my Power to remedy it; I think I ought to serve God as well as I can, if I cannot do it as well as I would. What God has forbid I must not do; but if it be not in my Power to do every Thing according as he has commanded; I doubt not but he will accept me, if I do the best that in my Circumstances I can.

I am,

Octob, 20,

1708.

Sir, Yours, &c.

POST-

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## POSTSCRIPT.

**B**Ecause (upon a careful Recollection of our late Discourse) I cannot but remember, that you drop'd some Expressions that seemed to have a Tincture not only of *Antiepiscopal* but even *Antiministerial* Principles; although I have already exceeded the Bounds of a Letter; yet I shall beg the Favour of you a little, with me, to review what I have but just now said touching the *Necessity of Episcopacy*.

And when you look back upon the three first Propositions which I have there laid down, I pray consult the *New Testament* and consider those Places, where not only a Command is given for the Performance of the several Parts of the Ministerial Function; but also *certain Persons* appointed for the Discharge of that Office; and that either with plain Direction, or a very sufficient intimation that they should take care to appoint others who should go on with the same Work, when they themselves should be gone off the Stage of this World: For Example,

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*Matth. 28. 19, 20.* It was to the *Eleven Disciples*, ver. 16. that our Saviour said, *Go teach all Nations baptizing them — And lo I am with you alway* (that is with you and your Successors in this Office) *even to the End of the World.*

*John 20. 21.* To the same Persons (only *Thomas* being absent, ver. 24.) it was that he said, *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you, &c.* Which plainly implies a Power of sending others where they could not go themselves, or when they should be about to leave the World.

And that the Apostles understood this Power to be thus given them in Order to be continued to succeeding Generations, is so plain from their Practice that nothing can be more. *For this Cause left I thee in Crete* (says St. Paul to Titus, chap. 1. ver. 5.) *that thou shouldest set in Order the Things that are wanting; and ordain Elders in every City.* Again *2 Tim. 2. 2.* *The Things that thou hast heard of me — the same commit thou to faithful Men who shall be able to teach others also.* And if any Man's bare personal Qualifications, without any other Mission, were a sufficient Warrant for him to take upon himself the Office of a Minister of the Gospel; what could St. Paul mean when he puts the Question, as of a thing beyond all manner of doubt, *Rom. 10. 15.*

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*How shall they preach except they be sent?*

As to the Fourth Proposition; I wave all Dispute about the NAME of *Bishop* and *Presbyter*; or by what other Title they were or might be distinguished. But that the OFFICE, there described by Mr. *Chillingworth* was not only exercised by the Apostles themselves; (which I think no Man denies,) but also by other Persons particularly appointed by them for that Purpose, is beyond Contradiction evident from the Instances of *Timothy* and *Titus*, and the Epistles to them written: Nor is it by any Means a sufficient Reply, to say, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were, in an extraordinary Manner, appointed by St. *Paul* to finish that Work of settling and establishing the Churches of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, which he, being called away to other Places, could not stay to make an End of; and were not in that Capacity, Ordinary Officers to be always continued in the Christian Church: For, besides that this is spoken without any manner of Proof, and is contrary to the unquestioned Opinion of the Christian Church for above Fifteen Hundred Years after *Christ*,<sup>a</sup> I desire you to tell me: Did  
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<sup>a</sup> *Timothy is called the First Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus of Crete, in those Inscriptions which are placed at the End of the Epistles, written by St. Paul*

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all those Persons, who in the several Parts of the Church, had upon the like Occasions received the same Power, from some of the Apostles, as *Timothy* and *Titus* had done from *St. Paul*. Did they, I say, all lose this Power as soon as the Apostles that employed them were dead; as the Death of any Prince or Potentate makes void the Commission of his Substitute or Embassador? If they did, then it will follow, that when the Churches dispersed throughout the World had most Occasion for the Exercise of this Power (*viz.* when, by the Death of the Apostles, they were deprived of their personal Care and Inspection) they could not have the Benefit of it; which seems absurd to imagine. But if the Power of *Timothy* and *Titus* (as it is described in the Epistles to them) did remain the same in them, and others such as they were, after that the Apostles were departed out of this World; then the Office of a Bishop, as above described, was of Apostolick Institution: Nor do I think it of any Mo-

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to them; Which Inscriptions, though not of Canonical Authority, I take to be of Credit sufficient to shew the Notion that the Antient Church had of their Office in those Places. Nor is it denied that Eusebius styles them Bishops of those Places in the same Sense that we now understand the Word Bishop. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 4.

ment to contend about the *Name* or Title given to them.

As to the Fifth Proposition: If we duly consider that the Office of superintending and governing the Churches, every where at first planted, was *chiefly* exercised by the Apostles themselves who planted them; as appears from the Example of *St. Paul*; who had the *care of all the Churches* (that is all of his planting) upon him, 2 *Cor.* 11. 28. *visited every City where he had preached the Word of the Lord*, *Acts* 15. 36. And though *absent*, yet could and did give *Judgment* in Cases that required the Discipline of the Church, 1 *Cor.* 5. 3. If this, I say, be duly considered; and also that the Holy Scripture is silent as to what was done by almost all the rest of the Apostles, beyond *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, in the Propagation of the Gospel: It is not to be wondered that we meet with so little in the *New Testament* touching any others who acted in the Capacity of *Bishops* (as we now understand that Word) as long as the Apostles remained alive. But as the Instances of *Timothy* and *Titus* do sufficiently prove that some such Bishops, as we contend for, were appointed, as Occasion required, even in the Days of the Apostles themselves: so is it freely owned by the greatest Champions for Presbytery that *immediately* after their Time,  
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his Form of Government universally obtained throughout the whole Christian Church. And that you may not think your self imposed upon by this Assertion, I shall here transcribe the Quotations that Mr. *Chillingworth* has set down, and add a few others for your farther Satisfaction.

*Petrus Molinaeus* in his Book *De Munere Pastoralis*, purposely written in Defence of the Presbyterial Government; acknowledgeth, That presently after the Apostles Times; or even in their Time (as Ecclesiastical Story witnesseth) it was ordained, that, in every City one of the Presbytery should be called a Bishop; who should have Pre-eminence over his Colleagues; to avoid Confusion, which oft-times ariseth out of Equality: And truly this Form of Government all Churches every where received.

*Theodorus Beza*, in his Tract, *De triplici Episcopatus genere*, confesseth in effect the same Thing. For, having distinguished Episcopacy into three Kinds, *Divine*, *Humane* and *Satanical*; and attributing to the Second (which he calls *Humane*, but we maintain and conceive to be Apostolical) not only a Priority of Order, but a Superiority of Power and Authority over other Presbyters, bounded yet by Laws and Canons provided against Tyranny; he clearly professeth that of this kind of Episcopacy,

is to be understood whatsoever we read concerning the Authority of Bishops (or Presidents as *Justin Martyr* calls them) in *Ignatius* and other more ancient Writers.

Thus far out of *Mr. Chillingworth*, whose Quotations indeed, having not the Books at hand, I have not examined, but yet have no doubt of the Exactness of them; not only on the Score of his great Ability and Sincerity, but also because I never could find that he has herein in the least been contradicted.

In the Margin of the same Discourse I find quoted *Dan. Chamier Panstrat.* Tom. 2. Lib. 10. Cap. 6. Sect. 24. His Words are *Inæqualitatem (Sc. inter Episcopos & Presbyteros) esse vetustissimam, ac vicinam Apostolorum temporibus: Quod nos ultro fate-mur.* He calls this Inequality there indeed an *Innovation*: But yet owns that in *Alexandria*, which was the last Church wherein it took place, it was introduced *aut nondum elapso, aut vix elapso primo seculo.*

I find there also quoted *Nic. Vedelius, Exerc. 3. in Epist. Ignat. ad Philadelph. cap. 14. & Exerc. 8. in Epist. ad Mariam. cap. 3.* but have not the Book by me. (But the former of these Quotations I find in *Vedelius's* Words set down by *Forbesius Irenic. lib. 2. cap. 11. Jam, inquit, tempore Ignatii erat discrimen illud Presbyterorum & Episcopi.*

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Hieronymus Zanchius (quoted also by Forbesius) saith thus, *Non ita multo post Apostolos, obtinuit consuetudo, ut ex multis pastoribus, seu Presbyteris & Episcopis, unus præficeretur reliquis omnibus, non tanquam Dominus, sed ut Rector reliquis Senatoribus; cui imprimis commendata esset cura totius alicujus Ecclesia; reliqui illius essent Coadjutores & Collegæ*—— *Ac proinde huic etiam primarii καὶ ἑξολὼν nomen Episcopi & Pastoris attribuebatur: Reliqui Collegæ Presbyterorum tantum nomine contenti fuerunt. Ita factum erit ut quæque Civitas unum haberet Episcopum & multos Presbyteros, &c.* In Quart. Præcept. Pag. (Forbesio) 732, 733. (Mibi) 666, 667.

Augustinus Marloratus, by the *Angels of the Seven Churches*, Rev. 1. 20. understands with the generality of Interpreters, the Bishops or Pastors of those Churches. And that you may clearly see what Notion he had of those Bishops which were appointed in that early Age of the Church, take his own Words (*Exposit. Ecclesiast. in Apoc. cap. 2. v. 1.*) *Non Populum aggreditur sed Clerum; nec quemlibet de Clero nominatim compellat, sed Principem Cleri, utique Episcopum.* This he speaks without any Doubt or Hesitation; and his Testimony is so much the more to be regarded, because he was well acquainted with, and a diligent

Collector of the Opinions of the learned Divines of those foreign reformed Churches where the Presbyterian Government was establish'd.

*Mounſieur Bochart* is indeed of Opinion, that the Government of the Church at first, was according to the Presbyterian Model: Into which Mistake it is probable he was led by finding Presbyters settled in several Churches, before there was any fixed or resident Bishop amongst them: The Office of superintending and governing the Churches every where being, as I have already said, for some time exercised by the several Apostles that planted them. But yet observe the free Acknowledgment of this learned Man in his own Words, *Cependant je demeure d'accord que l'Ordre Episcopal est de grande Antiquité, & qu'il a esté reçu avec beaucoup de fruit par toute l'église, bientôt après les Apostres.* Lettre a Monsieur Morley, p. 4.

Were it necessary in so plain a Case, I could add many more Quotations to the same Purpose. But I conclude this Point with one out of *David Blondel*, who was the greatest Champion that ever yet appeared against Episcopacy. He then (*Præf. ad Apol. pro Sentent. Hieron.*) describes the Place and Office of the Seniour Presbyter in every Church to have been much the same



same as I have said Mr. Chillingworth ascribes to a Bishop, calling them *Presbyterorum Præpositos*, ἐξάρχες, *Cleri totius capitæ πρωτοκληθέντες*, who had the first, or chief, Care of each Church, by the Consent of their Fellow Presbyters; and telling us, that the well or ill doing of the Flock committed to them, might justly be charged upon them. As he says it appears by the Messages sent to the Angels of the Asiatick Churches, Rev. 2. 3. And having in these and other Words described them as Persons of a remarkable Eminence above the rest of the Presbyters; he tells us (on what solid Ground I cannot find) that this Office of course belonged to the eldest Presbyter in every Church, upon whose Death he says it was, by Succession, derived to the next in Seniority, and so continued until the Year of our Lord 108. (for the Case of *Timothy* and *Titus* he looks upon to be extraordinary) after which he has these remarkable Words: *Sed paulo post — ad Suffragia ubique (velut conspiratione facta) itum, ut deinceps fratrum caput ἢ πρωτεύων ἐσσετ non (pro veteri more) πρωτοκλειρονομήας, sed (ex recenti instituto) inter collegas dotibus ad communem ædificationem potior, &c.* Pag. 6, 7, 8. So that *Blondel* himself, a profess'd Adversary, grants the Office of a Bishop to have been from the very first Establishment of Churches;

Churches; but only alledges (how truly I do not now enquire) that this Office at first went by Succession; and that soon after the Year 108. it came every where to be Elective. And to make this Scheme of his out, he is forced to have recourse to a very extravagant Supposition; namely that the Churches every where, on a sudden, *as if they had conspired together*, made a Change in the Manner of appointing their Bishops or Presidents, and brought it from Succession to Election: Altho' it is very evident that so material a Change in a Thing of that Consequence could no be introduced without great Opposition, which therefore must have made it a Business of longer time than he supposes.

The sixth and last Proposition which I have laid down, touching the *Necessity of Episcopacy*, is so plain an Inference from what went before, that I think it cannot be gain said. For that the Form of Church-Polity, settled by the Apostles, should, immediately, after their decease, be universally changed, and that without any Opposition given, or so much as notice taken by any Writer of that Age, or near it, that such a Change there was, is a Supposition that sure no Man that considers thoroughly will ever admit.

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most learned Adversaries of Episcopacy, our *Church-men* gathers enough to conclude, with the established Church, that *Bishops*, as well as *Priests*, or Presbyters and *Deacons* have been even from the *Apostles Time*, Pref. to the Form of Ordinat.

I pray observe, that St. *John* lived to the Year of *Christ*, 99. or, as some say, two or three Years longer. Now if the Church, during his Life, had innovated in the Matter of Episcopacy, he certainly would have given publick Opposition to it: And how so great a Change as is pretended could *universally*, and *without Opposition*, be introduced within eleven or twelve Years after his Death is, to me, a Riddle: not to be accounted for.



*F I N I S.*

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V. A Gentleman's Religion, in Three Parts: The  
First contains the Principles of Natural Religion.  
The Second and Third, the Doctrines of Christiani-  
ty, both as to Faith and Practice; With an *Ap-  
pendix*, wherein it is proved, that nothing contrary  
to our Reason can possibly be the Object of our  
Belief; but that it is no just Exception to some of  
the Doctrines of Christianity, that they are above  
our Reason, *12s*. price 2*s*. 6*d*.

VI. The Divine Authority of Church Govern-  
ment, and Episcopacy, stated and asserted, upon  
Principles common to all Christians. In a Sermon  
at the Consecration of the Right Reverend Fa-  
ther in God, Dr. Peter Brown, late Provost of  
Trinity College, Dublin, and now Lord Bishop of  
Cork and Ross; Preached at the College Chapel  
on Sunday, April 2. 1710.



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